



THE BLACKBIRD BUGLER

MR. THOMAS B. REARDON, PRINCIPAL

VOLUME 7, ISSUE 7

FEBRUARY 2012



A (MJD) Year Review



As we wrap up the first semester of the 2011-2012 school year, I want to once again thank you for the opportunity to lead Voorheesville Elementary School. Being at the exact mid-point of the school year, it is difficult for me not to want to reminisce and reflect upon the great work and citizenship exhibited by our staff and students on a daily basis. From the consistently rigorous, participatory academic instruction that your children are a part of each day to their role in making our school, community, and world a better place than they found it, your children have certainly taken full advantage of the academic and social programming offered by VES. We have recently concluded the second marking period, and have generated report cards to be sent home with students via the return envelope this week. You will also notice the use of the narrative box this grading period. Like any advancement, though we have made significant progress in the accuracy and standardization of our report cards, these are truly a work in progress, and we will continue to modify in order to continuously improve upon

our means of providing information to you. Please know that regardless of the instrument, your questions, comments, or concerns are always welcome, and we do invite you to contact your child's teacher or me should you have any questions (both large and small) regarding the information set before you. We look forward to offering a second parent conference opportunity in March, we will be using an online scheduling software to make this a smooth process. More information will be forthcoming.

Frequent, consistent two-way communication is the backbone of any school-community. As referenced in my initial Open House Speeches, this is your child's second home, and your active participation in our program is what fosters our success. Whether it's through volunteering in your child's classroom, attending a PTA meeting, or simply providing feedback (both positive and constructive) to us regarding an issue or program, please consider our doors and ears always open! If you haven't signed up for our School News Notifier or Twitter system yet, I highly encourage you to do so, as

this will allow you to not only receive important notifications, but also a reminder to view the Principal's Corner when it is updated. I highly encourage you to visit this website often, as it does provide me with a means of informing you of our school events and observations in between Bugler issues.

As we prepare to transition to Spring and begin our budget conversations, I also encourage you to participate in our District-Wide Budget Meetings. Please see the side panel for dates, times, and locations.

Once again, your positive support and communication, coupled with the dedication of your children and our staff has made the perfect recipe for a school and community working together. Here's to a wonderful second half of the year and beyond!

Thomas B. Reardon
Principal
Voorheesville Elementary
School 518-765-2382



Author Bruce Coville presenting to students in Grades 3 - 5.

Upcoming Dates of Interest

February 13th - 7:30 pm BOE Meeting HS LGI

February 16th - Site Based Meeting 6:00 pm
PTA Meeting 7:00 pm

February 20th-24th
Winter Recess

March 5th & 26th -
BOE Special Budget Meetings HS LGI 7:30 PM

March 12th - BOE Meeting HS LGI 7:30 PM

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Please use the following directory for your convenience:

Voorheesville Elementary School	765-2382
Thomas B. Reardon, Principal	
School Nurse:	
Colleen Brackett	765-2382 Ext. 506
Attendance Office:	
mmooss@vcsdk12.org or	765-2382 Ext. 514
Kid's Club Program (afterschool)	765-2043
Cindy Abelseth, Director	
Transportation Department:	
Mike Goyer	765-2382 Ext. 508
Priscilla Clark	765-2382 Ext. 521

REMINDERS



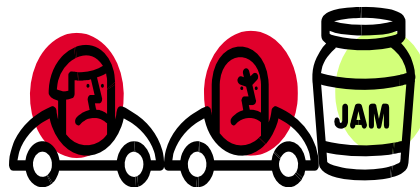
VOORHEESVILLE ELEMENTARY KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION

Parents are asked to call **Mrs. Moss** at the **Voorheesville Elementary School** (765-2382 ext 504) or e-mail at mmooss@vcsdk12.org if you have a child who will be entering Kindergarten in September of 2012.

Children must be five years of age on or before December 1, 2012 to register.

There will be an information meeting on **March 15th, 2012 at 7:00 pm. (Parents only).**

Kindergarten registration and the screening process will be explained. At this meeting you will schedule a time to have your child screened on May 1st or 2nd.



Please help us prevent parking lot backups by dropping off students without getting out of your vehicle. If you need to assist your child further, we do ask that you park your car so that others can continue to drop off and exit. Thank you for your cooperation!

Yearbook Orders Are Now Being Taken

Yearbooks will be ordered Monday, February 6th - Friday, February 17th. Orders may be sent in to your child's homeroom teacher.

The cost is \$20 and checks should be made payable to Voorheesville PTA.

Any questions may be directed to Bonnie Reilly - jreilly832@verizon.net or 765-2481.



Parents - please remember to call or email if your child is **sick** or will be **tardy** due to an appointment. If we do not receive a phone call or an email we will need to call you to verify their absence/tardiness. **We would appreciate it if you could call before 9:30 AM.** Also if your child is coming in late you need to walk them in and sign them in late in the main office. Please call the attendance office or email Michelle Moss at mmooss@vcsdk12.org.



Blackbird Paradise Garden Receives Funding for Hydration System

Student farmers at Voorheesville's Elementary School have been learning to grow crops in the Blackbird Paradise Garden since 2009. Early this spring, the garden will be improved with a \$5,300 state-of-the-art automated hydration system to increase efficiencies and reduce water use thanks to the Voorheesville Community & School Foundation (VCSF), the Voorheesville Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and the Community Foundation of the Greater Capital Region Standish Fund. From creating outdoor hands-on learning laboratories to combating childhood obesity to teaching stewardship of natural resources, schoolyard gardens are a growing trend across the United States.

"Our school is among the many that have joined the "green schoolyard movement" said, Tom Reardon, Elementary School Principal. "Thanks to donations and sweat-equity from community organizations and volunteers, we are proud the Blackbird Paradise Garden is a regionally recognized model of a successful school-based organic garden. Reardon added, "Teachers are able to translate math, science and social studies into hands-on garden applications. At harvest times the students are excited to reap the bounty of their labor and eat the fresh produce they have grown together."

"The VCSF is delighted to once again to partner with community organizations and help fund the much needed water irrigation system at the Blackbird Paradise Garden," said Nancy Rucks, VCSF President. "Students develop an appreciation of the health benefits that come from eating garden fresh foods, and will be exposed to one of the most pressing issues of our time - reducing our demand for fresh water. They will learn how irrigation practices such as directly watering plants near their roots minimize water loss through evaporation. By experiencing the environmental benefits of water conservation at the garden, students can incorporate conservation practices at home. Less wasted water means there will be more water available for everyone living in the watershed."

Jennifer Hampston, PTA president, noted, "The Blackbird Paradise Garden has been one of the most productive PTA projects for our school and community. This hydration system will increase its sustainability long term, and will allow volunteers to focus more on curricula that will create meaningful learning experiences for our students."

"Installing automated hydration to the 20 raised beds in the 35' x 70' garden is a dream come true for the garden volunteers," said Bri McAlevey, co-chair of the Garden Project Committee. McAlevey continued, "An efficient water management system is going to allow us to devote more time to garden management, pest control and educational programming while conserving water and producing a more bountiful harvest for the school community. Unless you're an avid gardener, it's hard to realize the time commitment involved and the negative effects of uneven watering."

For more information on the Blackbird Paradise, please contact Bri McAlevey or Tricia Putman at vvillegarden@gmail.com.

The Voorheesville Farm to School Initiative

A PTA sponsored Garden Project Program



Chefs Move Program (K-12)

The letters written by our First Graders were mailed to Michelle Obama. You can enjoy reading some of the letters on our school website at: <http://www.vcsdk12.org/garden/F2S/ChefsMovetoSchools.htm>

Bonnie Cabbage Program (G 3)

A new program coming this Spring! Our Third Graders will be given a cabbage plant to grow at home and have a chance to win a \$1,000 scholarship. Learn more and see how big the cabbage grows: <http://www.vcsdk12.org/garden/F2S/BonnieCabbage.htm>

Good Eats (Healthy Snack) Program (K-1)



January: Carrots

- Learned about Vitamin A
- Discussed "No Farms No Food"
- Made carrot apple juice
- Enjoyed juice and carrots
- Gave carrot top kits to grow in the classroom

February – sweet potatoes

We welcome your involvement!

Contact us at VvilleF2S@nycap.rr.com and visit [http://vcsd.neric.org/garden/garden_home .htm](http://vcsd.neric.org/garden/garden_home.htm)